

In the Claims:

Claims 1 and 8 are amended herein. Withdrawn claims 5-7 are canceled, being non-elected. Claims 10-13 were previously canceled.

1. (currently amended) A method for providing storage areas in a storage server for a plurality of portable data terminals connected over a network, said method comprising the steps of:

allocating a uniquely dedicated storage area for each of users of said plurality of portable data terminals;

storing software, which is purchase-requested at a software sales site on the network by one of the users, from the software sales site into one of the dedicated storage areas uniquely allocated to said one of the users of the storage server without sending the software from the software sales site directly to a portable data terminal of said one of the users; and

making available the software, stored in one of the dedicated storage areas in said storage server, to said one of the users in response to a request from said one of the users, while keeping the software intact in said one of the dedicated storage areas.

2. (previously presented) The method for providing storage areas according to claim 1, wherein an expiration date until which said one of the users is allowed to use the software stored in said storage server is set, further comprising the step of making the software, which is in one of the dedicated storage areas, unavailable to said one of the users after the expiration date.

3. (previously presented) The method for providing storage areas according to claim 1, further comprising the step of charging one of the users for the purchase-requested software when the purchase-request is made, when said one of the users downloads the software from said one of the dedicated storage areas, or when said one of the users indicates an intention to continue to use after a trial period passes after the downloading.

4. (previously presented) The method for providing storage areas according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

storing software, which is not purchase-requested by one of the users, into one of the dedicated storage areas uniquely allocated to said one of the users;

allowing said one of the users to select the software not purchase-requested; and

charging said one of the users for the software when said one of the users downloads the selected software or when

said one of the users indicates an intention to continue to use after a trial period.

5. (canceled)

6. (canceled)

7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) A storage server connected to a plurality of portable data terminals over a network, said storage server comprising:

a storage unit having dedicated storage areas, each uniquely allocated to an individual user of one of said plurality of portable data terminals;

means for receiving software, which is purchase-requested by one of the users of said plurality of portable data terminals, from a software sales site on the network for storing the software into one of the dedicated storage areas uniquely allocated to said one of the users;

a management table storing therein management information about the software stored in the dedicated storage areas of the users; and

means for referencing said management table in response to access from one of the users and for sending the software, which is stored in one of the dedicated storage areas uniquely allocated to said one of the users, to the portable data terminal

of said one of the users, while keeping the software intact in said one of the dedicated storage areas.

9. (previously presented) The storage server according to claim 8, wherein said storage unit further comprises a common storage area in which an application program body is stored as the software for common use by a plurality of users and wherein data associated with the application program and corresponding to each user is stored separately in the dedicated storage area of the user.

10. (canceled)

11. (canceled)

12. (canceled)

13. (canceled)

14. (previously presented) The method for providing storage areas according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

accepting a purchase request of software from one of the users at the software sales site; and

receiving, according to said purchase request, the purchase-requested software or identification information associated therewith at a site of said storage server such that said purchase-requested software or identification information

associated therewith is stored into said one of the dedicated storage areas uniquely allocated to one of the users.

15. (previously presented) The method for providing storage areas according to claim 1, wherein said step of storing software into one of the dedicated storage areas allocated uniquely to said one of the users, is performed after the software is purchase-requested at a software sales site on the network by the said one of the users.